

## Message Text

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53

ACTION SMI-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 SCI-06 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 RSR-01 /033 W  
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R 271245Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9674  
INFO AMCONSUL CASABLANCA POUCH  
AMCONSUL TANGIER BY POUCH

UNCLAS RABAT 3449

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: OSCI PFOR MO  
SUBJECT: SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION ARCHEOLOGICAL PROJECT AT  
QSAR AS-SAGHIR

DEPARTMENT PASS SMITHSONIAN

SMITHSONIAN FOR WHITEHEAD

1. MINISTER OF CULTURE MEKKI NACIRI INFORMED ME  
EVENING JULY 26 THAT HE HAD TAKEN DECISION SUSPEND  
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE ALL PERMITS FOR FOREIGNERS EXCAVATE  
MOROCCAN SITES AND SMITHSONIAN PERMIT NO LONGER VALID.  
HE SAID DECISION NOT TAKEN LIGHTLY AND NECESSITATED BY  
BEHAVIOR FOREIGN ARCHEOLOGISTS IN MOROCCO SINCE  
INDEPENDENCE, DURING WHICH PERIOD MOROCCANS HAD RECEIVED  
ONLY 20 PERCENT OF OBJECTS FOUND IN EXCAVATION HERE, MOST OF  
WHICH HAD BEEN SPIRITED OUT OF COUNTRY AND NOW IN FOREIGN  
MUSEUMS. NACIRI SAID HE HAD INVENTORY OF ITEMS THUS  
LOOTED FROM MOROCCO AND THEY WERE WORTH BILLIONS OF  
FRANCS. NOT ONLY DID ARCHEOLOGISTS STEAL MOROCCAN  
PATRIMONY, THEY ALSO LEFT SITES IN DISORDER. HE  
PLANNING MEET WITH REGIONAL INSPECTORS OF ANTIQUITIES  
JULY 31 TO DISCUSS WITH THEM DRAFTING OF NEW SET OF  
REGULATIONS SETTING CONDITIONS FOR FUTURE EXCAVATIONS,  
WHICH WOULD BE CARRIED OUT UNDER CLOSE MOROCCAN  
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SUPERVISION AND WITH ACTUAL PARTICIPATION OF MOROCCANS

ON THE SITE TO PREVENT FOREIGN ARCHEOLOGISTS FROM  
SLIPPING THINGS INTO POCKETS.

2. I SAID TO DATE THERE HAD BEEN NO AMERICAN EXCAVATION IN MOROCCO. SMITHSONIAN WAS VERY SERIOUS INSTITUTION FULLY PREPARED COOPERATE IN EVERY REASONABLE WAY WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES. AGREEMENT CONCLUDED WITH MOROCCANS LAST FALL FOR DIG AT QSAR AS-SAGHIR HAD FORESEEN PARTICIPATION BY AND TRAINING OF MOROCCANS AT SITE. NACIRI SAID HE COULD NOT DISCRIMINATE AND WOULD HAVE TO BAN ALL FOREIGN EXCAVATIONS FOR TIME BEING. INDICATED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE AT HAND PERSONNEL QUALIFIED SUPERVISE DIG IN ANY EVENT.

3. I ASKED WHEN NEW REGULATIONS WOULD BE READY FOR DISCUSSION. NACIRI SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT THEM BE READY UNTIL THIS FALL, PERHAPS IN TIME TO REACH AGREEMENT FOR DIG NEXT YEAR.

4. COMMENT: ABOVE DISCUSSED WITH DR. HOLOD AND WE RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDE THERE NO POSSIBILITY SMITHSONIAN PROJECT GETTING STARTED THIS YEAR. WE HOPEFUL SOMETHING CAN BE ARRANGED FOR NEXT YEAR, HOWEVER, AND WILL FOLLOW UP. DR. HOLOD WILL STAY IN RABAT UNTIL AFTER JULY 31 MEETING TO SEE WHAT PROGNOSIS IS.

5. FOR SMITHSONIAN: PLEASE CONVEY ABOVE TO CHARLES REDMAN,  
CARP, BOX 205, RAMAH, NEW MEXICO.PARKER

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